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World Bank Group 2022 Spring Meetings Ministerial Roundtable for Support to Ukraine: Remarks by World Bank Group President David Malpass

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Good afternoon, I'd like to welcome everyone joining us here at the World Bank Group Headquarters in Washington, DC, as well as the global audience joining us via livestream.

I have been deeply horrified and shocked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the atrocities committed against the civilian population, and the loss of life and livelihoods for millions of Ukrainians. For nearly two months, the people of Ukraine have demonstrated incredible resilience and bravery.

Ukraine's needs are immense and evolving. We are here today as part of our continuing assessment of those needs – recognizing that the situation on the ground changes by the hour.

We are honored to have His Excellency, President Volodymyr Zelensky, joining us live from Ukraine. President Zelensky has demonstrated powerful leadership throughout the war.

Mr. President, you and your nation have shown strength, tenacity and heroism in the face of aggression. President Zelensky, the floor is yours.

[Pres. Zelensky speaks]

Thank you, Mr. President.

You have the world's admiration, and we are grateful for your participation in today's meeting.

Next, I would like to welcome His Excellency, Denys Shmyhal, Prime Minister of Ukraine.

Prime Minister, the floor is yours.

[Prime Minister speaks]

Thank you very much, Mr. Prime Minister. We are honored to have you here today and we're also honored to have Finance Minister Marchenko, and Governor Shevchenko here with us and finance ministers from many countries around the world. We appreciate everyone's participation and I want to say a few words of thanks to all those that have contributed already.

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Let me repeat, on behalf of the World Bank Group, we have been deeply horrified and shocked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the atrocities committed against the civilian population, and the loss of life and livelihoods for millions of Ukrainians. The Russian invasion is needlessly taking lives, injuring so many, and causing massive damage to your economy. We appreciate you going through some of that, we know how painful it is.

War is, first and foremost, a human tragedy.

The World Bank Group has completed an early assessment of the physical damage. It puts the cost in terms of buildings and infrastructure, the narrow cost, at roughly \$60 billion and does not include the growing economic costs to Ukraine's economy. Of course, the war is still ongoing, so those costs are rising.

Ukraine's government and state-owned enterprises face a large non-military fiscal deficit and debt burden.

Action to Support Relief, Recovery and Reconstruction

Since the invasion, the World Bank Group has provided fast-disbursing financial support to help the government provide critical services, pay wages for hospital workers, public servants, and the elderly.

Through IFC, we have provided immediate working capital for companies providing supplies to Ukraine.

We have now mobilized more than \$3 billion for Ukraine to support the continuation of essential government services. This was made possible, and I want to thank the grant contributions through our Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) from the United States, the United Kingdom, Norway, Denmark, Austria, Latvia, Lithuania, Iceland; and guarantees from the United Kingdom, Netherlands, and Sweden; and parallel financing from Japan. These announcements were still being made today. And I know many other countries are also putting money directly into the support effort for Ukraine. Our mechanisms are providing rapid, targeted, and secure delivery of this support to Ukraine in the challenging times.

The priority should be to fill Ukraine's current financing needs in a way that minimizes its future debt burden. Grant contributions will be very important. Our MDTF is one mechanism that can be utilized. I also would like to acknowledge complementary approaches, including the IMF's Administered Account, the European Union's Solidarity Trust Fund, EBRD's Resilience Package.

It will be important for all partners to continue coordinating their support for Ukraine's budget needs.

Relief, Recovery and Resilient Reconstruction

We are working toward three phases of the recovery effort of relief, recovery, and resilience. I know many around the table are working in those efforts.

As the war continues, we will work to build confidence in Ukraine's financial, monetary, and fiscal institutions, fostering currency stability as we go forward.

In the six to eight months after peace, we believe the reconstruction of essential infrastructure connectivity—such as transport, power, heating, and digital—should be urgently addressed.

And then, over the medium term, reinforcing the macro-fiscal capacity; rebuilding cities and households; and strengthening the agriculture and business sectors.

The war has been devastating for Ukraine's people and its economy and it must end now. Rebuilding will take hard work, determination, and struggle, but I remain optimistic. With our collective support, Ukraine can achieve a brighter future.

With that I want to say thank you and turn to my friend and colleague IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva to give her remarks.